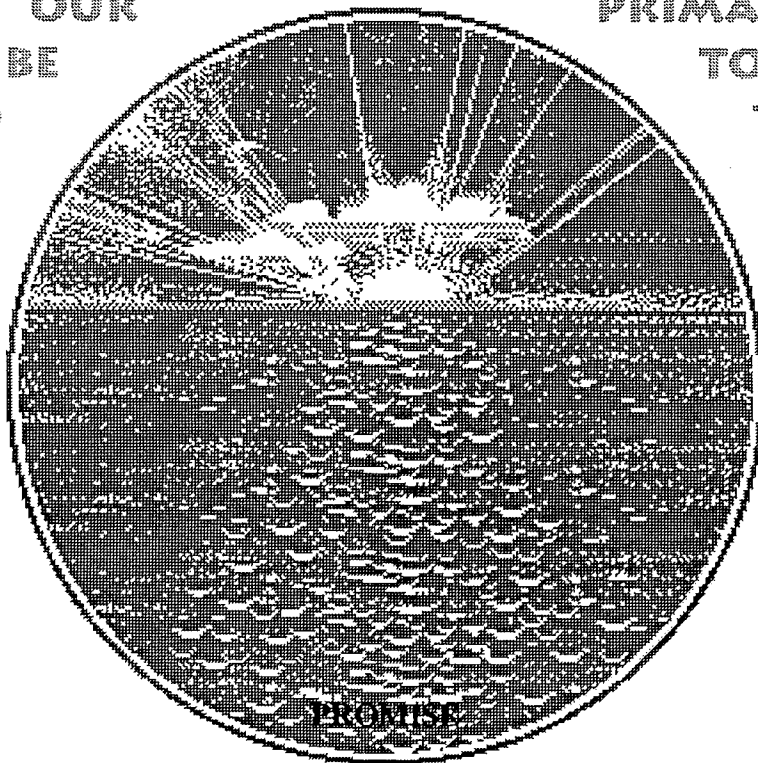


New Awakenings

"WHAT IS OUR MESSAGE? THAT AN ADDICT, ANY ADDICT, CAN STOP USING DRUGS, LOSE THE DESIRE TO USE, AND FIND A NEW WAY TO LIVE. OUR MESSAGE IS HOPE AND THE PROMISE OF FREEDOM. WHEN IT IS SAID AND DONE, OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE CAN ONLY BE TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE ADDICT WHO STILL SUFFERS BECAUSE THAT IS ALL WE HAVE TO GIVE."



BECAUSE YOU HAVE GIVEN YOUR MESSAGE TO ME;

I WILL HONOR IT.

I WILL CARRY IT

AND DELIVER IT.

I WILL HOLD IT IN THE HIGHEST ESTEEM

BECAUSE IT HAS DELIVERED ME.

WHEN CALLED UPON I WILL ANSWER.

I WILL CONTINUE TO CARRY IT IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

AND HONOR IT WITH MY LIFE.

I WILL BE A LIVING EXAMPLE OF OUR RECOVERY

AND MAKE THE MOST OF THIS.

BECAUSE YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THIS

I AM.

ONE ADDICT'S EXPERIENCE AND OPINION ON THE SPANISH BASIC TEXT

The following article, written in 1991, was printed previously in the Spring/Summer 1992 issue of the newsletter *Speaking of Service (SOS)*.

In the very near future (November or December), the World Service Office, Incorporated (WSO) will come out with their newest product, the Spanish Basic Text. This news fills me with mixed feelings. On the one hand, we will finally have a Spanish Text, and in a way that makes my heart very glad. Yet on the other hand, the facts are inescapable: this book has not been written for addicts by addicts. Instead, this is a translation of the Fifth Edition done by a professional translator from Spain, and it will not go through any kind of review and approval process when finished.

There's a really sad part about this, in my opinion. You see, we could have had a Spanish Text that was created through the Group Conscience process, just the way all our literature should be created; in fact, we came very close to having such a book before the process was stopped. Instead, what we're going to get will be a book that was principally motivated by the World Service Office Inc.'s need for money-making "product." Let me give you a bit of the history of this project, so you can better understand my feelings about it.

In early 1988, a motion came before the South Dade Area Service Committee (ASC) and it passed unanimously. Then in turn our area sent it to our then-region, the Florida Regional Service Committee (RSC), where it again passed unanimously. This motion became Motion #1 among the Regional Motions section of the 1988-89 World Service Conference Agenda Report. The motion read: "That the WSC ask the WSO to make the translation and publication of a Spanish Edition of the Basic Text into a top priority."

All of us, in both our Area and Region, felt sure that

this motion would pass the Conference that year; it was a "motherhood issue" which everyone could support. The WSO would then be responsible to the WSC for the quick translation and publication of the Spanish Text. We were all extremely happy! However, we had no idea what was about to happen behind the scenes, before the motion even had a chance to be presented on the floor of the Conference. Bob Stone (then the Executive Director of the World Service Office Inc.) pulled aside our then-RSR (Regional Service Representative) and proceeded to persuade him to withdraw the motion!! We never found out how Bob Stone convinced this RSR to place his will ahead of our whole Region's Group Conscience. We know that the WSO's position was: A) This motion is unnecessary because we're already taking care of it; and B) We certainly wouldn't want to set a precedent of having the WSC dictate policy to the WSO, now, would we?

In my opinion, this RSR betrayed the Group Conscience of his whole Region. (I am confident that this is not too strong a term.) Further, he helped set the stage for a process that would rob suffering Spanish addicts, from over 20 Spanish-speaking countries around the world (and in the U.S. too), of the benefit of a Basic Text that would have carried the genuine N.A. Spirit of Recovery from the disease of addiction. What they will get instead will be a book geared to maximum possible sales to CompCare and Hazelden.

I was taught by all of you that the Gift of Recovery is granted to us by a Loving God as He may express Himself in our Group Conscience. By definition, one person's translation is only one person's opinion, not the gift of Group Conscience. All who are familiar with the Spanish language know very well that the Spanish that is spoken in Peru is different in many ways from the Spanish spoken in Columbia, Argentina or the Philippines. Likewise, the Cuban-Americans in Miami speak a very different dialect than that spoken by Mexican-Americans in California or Texas, or by Puerto Rican-Americans in New York or New Jersey. When it still looked like this would be a "Group-Conscience" project, we were trying to resolve these differences in dialect by designing a "consensus "

Publishing Box

One of the ways we get new subscribers is from NA Members' names and addresses you send us. When we get these we send them TWO(2) Free Issues. If they don't subscribe they don't get any more. (See bottom of page 11). So feel free to send us addresses of NA Members you think might want to get our newsletter. And oh yeah, send us articles. Now. Please.

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We share our experience and learn from each other. No individual inside or outside the fellowship represents Narcotics Anonymous. Nothing appearing in this newsletter is necessarily more than the feelings of one NA Member, just for today.

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from previous page

translation; but now the book will have only one voice. The professional translator hired by the World Service Office Inc. lives in Barcelona, Spain. The Spanish Text will be done in Castilian Spanish. (To many Hispanics, this would be like using an English Basic Text that was written using Scottish English.)

In my opinion, there are only two possible logical ways to handle this project.

1) Every Spanish-speaking country's Fellowship should produce their own translation in their very own dialect, with their own street-slang like Panama and Columbia have already done. (The WSO had no choice but to approve those two books - but they did so only for use in their respective countries!)

2) We could try to get as many (English-Spanish) bilingual addicts as possible to form a committee. They would do the actual work of translating, and when finished (or in sections) they would get it to as many Countries, Regions, Groups or individual addicts as possible, for their review and approval.

Only these two options would abide by our Tradition of full self-support, using literature written by addicts for addicts; and only these two options would make sure that the Loving God of our Group Conscience could speak to us through our literature. The first option mentioned frankly has no appeal to the World Service Office Inc., simply because they can't make any money from it. It did look for a while as though the WSO would do the right thing, and attempt to obtain a Spanish Translation through the process of Group Conscience. If I may, I'll try to explain what really happened.

After the 1988-89 Conference was over, Hispanic addicts around the US and the world got wind of what had happened to our motion. The WSO was starting to feel the pressure from many frustrated addicts in many different quarters. Spanish addicts from all over started to ask why this welcome motion, which would have finally produced the long-overdue Spanish Basic Text, had been so skillfully killed by the WSO. But this pressure was only one factor.

As we mentioned before, two Spanish countries with the fastest-growing Fellowships (Columbia and Panama) had gotten tired of waiting for the WSO, and were already producing and distributing their own versions of the Basic Text, at no profit to the WSO. (While not perfect, these little books were cheap and useful.) Meanwhile, the Fellowship in Spain had started re-translating the IP's (Information Pamphlets), because they were not happy with the American-Spanish translations that the WSO was selling them. Moreover, once they were finished with the IP's they were going to start on their own translation of the Basic Text!

Meanwhile, there was a far more important factor that was shaping the WSO's plans: sales of the English Basic Text. They had soared for years, at tremendous profit to the WSO; but now they were dropping fast. (This was due in great part to the Fourth Edition Fiasco Controversy, and then to the wide availability of the "Baby Blue" Free Basic Text in many parts of the country.) Suddenly, the WSO was cash-poor, and it needed a new product that would guarantee good profits. As quickly as possible, they needed to make a Spanish Basic Text available for sale.

The WSO went about this by contacting some of the members who had shown interest in working on such a project. (I was one of those members from the very start of the Committee.) Thus in September 1989, the WSO Spanish Basic Text Translation Committee was born.

At first, all the Committee members were very excited. The WSO had led us to believe that this project would be open to the fresh air, and that it would seek out as wide a Group Conscience as possible. Alas, this was not to be. The Committee met only five times: 12/89 and 3/90 in Miami, 5/90 in Houston, 8/90 in New York, and finally 12/90 in Los Angeles. By this time, we were more than half-way finished. The enthusiasm was infectious. Addicts from such cultures as Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Cuba, Columbia, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Panama, Spain, and Ecuador, and Regional committees in Florida, Texas, New York, Southern California, San Diego, and Puerto Rico, had come to work together. But then the WSO pulled the plug.

At this last meeting in Los Angeles, without any previous indication or warning, we were informed that the Committee was "no longer in existence." The World Service Office Incorporated had decided to hire a professional translator from Spain to work on the translation. All of us were stunned; some of us were convinced the WSO had to kill the committee because we had come too close to succeeding. I'm afraid they really wanted a "work for hire" that the Office could own, not a Group-Conscience work that would belong to us all.

They gave us excuses at the time: "You're taking too long;" "There are many Spanish addicts dying out there;" "The Committee is spending more than we can afford." Actually, the WSO only paid for hotel and meeting rooms. donations from the Areas and Regions, and from the Committee members' own pockets, covered all the other expenses, including food, airfare, etc. But the worst excuse was an insult: they told us that, in effect, we did not really know what we were doing, and that we were screwing the project up.

We had called on all the Love, Experience, Strength and Hope, the Faith and Caring, and the Spirit of Recovery that were the gifts of God and NA. We had been carefully and lovingly distilling these gifts from the Basic Text, and putting them in the Spanish version, so that the suffering Spanish addicts could have that same wonderful message of recovery, written by and for addicts, that those of us lucky enough to read English have received. But the miracle of what we could do together was not good enough for the World Service Office Incorporated. They wanted a "professionally done" product, faster and cheaper.

The book will be out soon, and the WSO will sell thousands of copies at once to their best customers, CompCare and Hazelden. (And you thought we were their biggest customer!) Surely the WSO will make lots of money. But I wonder: what will happen to all those Spanish addicts who are dying? If we sell them an inferior "Debased Text," designed to please treatment centers, isn't that the height of discrimination, of personalities before principles? Isn't the quality of our message worth more than a few pieces of silver?♦

...From Russia With Love

This article reprinted from the December 1993 Cambridge NA New Attitudes. Portions in bold relate to translations and were conspicuously absent in a version printed by The NA Way, April, 1994. The NA Way is an official organ of the World Service Office, Inc.

My trip to the Baltics and Russia was wonderful, intense, emotional, sometimes upsetting, and full of growth.

Before leaving the USA I wrote to Daiva G. in Vilnius, and Sergey K. in Riga - these are both contacts that I got from WSO - and got letters back from them both.

My first NA stop was in Cambridge, England to see my old sponsor there, and to hit a more-or-less familiar meeting before going into new territory. Next stop was in Vilnius, Lithuania, to see Daiva and any other NA members there. I spent many hours talking with Daiva about all sorts of things, program-related and otherwise, it was really a pretty intense interaction. I also ended up doing two H&I presentations, with Daiva translating, first at the Daytop treatment center, which recently opened in Vilnius, and then where Daiva works, in a detox ward for addicts in a hospital. (A few days ago I was talking at a treatment center here, in Seattle on the monthly panel that I lead, and it was really nice to say that the month before I had been doing the same thing in Lithuania!) Daiva was a great translator-I could be looking at the person with whom I was talking, seeing and hearing the expressions and emotions - and language didn't feel like a big barrier. She was also really good about translating questions for the other person and then translating their reply, even when she knew the answer herself and could have left the other person out. It turns out I was the first NA visitor there, although they've had a number of AA visitors previously. They were really glad to have the contact.

There is one NA meeting a week in Vilnius, at Daytop. Daiva was unsure whether to register it as a regular NA meeting since it was at Daytop, but I told her that at least by my understanding it certainly was a regular NA meeting, since it is open to all addicts. We also talked about making it clear that it is not being affiliated with the Center. The fellowship there is small - 3 to 4 members in Vilnius, plus the group in Kaunas. (I didn't go to Kaunas, and don't have info on that group, but Daiva says it's still going.) I also met another of the members, Sniezana R. She doesn't speak English, but I was told her Russian is excellent.

Besides NA there is also AA and Al-Anon in Vilnius. Daiva is a regular at the AA meetings, she said. In addition to exporting the twelve step programs, the US has unfortunately also exported all the hassles about alcohol vs. other drugs. Daiva told me that for a while she was wondering about whether she was an alcoholic and could go to AA too, or whether she was just an addict. In this case, an American AA member there told her the only requirement for AA membership is a desire

to stop drinking. In places like Seattle, newcomers are often given the advice to stick with one program but in a place like Vilnius that would probably be bad advice, since Daiva would really be without much support. The way she got introduced to NA is that maybe 5 years ago an American who ran a chain of treatment centers in Florida took a bunch of Lithuanians over there and put them through his center.

Daiva has translated some NA literature into Lithuanian, including a translation of the White Book. She said she sent a copy to WSO two years ago and got a reply saying "thanks, we'll get back to you" but didn't hear anything further. She also had 800 copies printed up! One thing that gives me some confidence in the translation is how good Daiva was as a translator when I was doing the H&I work. She also translated IP7, and the Basic Text (the latter by treating it as a job, working 8 hours a day over a summer). She has a printed copy of the Basic Text in Lithuanian-it was also on a computer disk, but when she left the job that had the computer, she didn't have enough money to buy the disk, and so they erased it!!!

Next stop was Riga in Latvia. This visit was brief and with less interaction, although the fellowship seems to be doing OK there. I visited the Riga edition of Daytop. There was one resident who showed me around the place, I talked for a little with some other people there, and left some more copies of the Russian literature. They started a weekly NA meeting a month ago, somewhere else in the city, which gets addicts both from Daytop and elsewhere.

I didn't hear of any NA activity in Estonia. (Daiva said that she heard a doctor in Estonia say that Estonians didn't have a drug problem - it was a Russian problem, and the only problems in Estonia were due to Russians living there. Hmmmmmm. Estonia certainly didn't seem immune to the problems of Western countries - I got hassled by skinheads there, for example.)

I almost made contact with NA in Helsinki - I made a quick trip over there to see a doctor about an eye infection (another story) - but the clinic gave me the wrong address for the meeting and I couldn't find it.

My last NA stop was in St. Petersburg, Russia. I met Lena S. at Pushkinskaya, the subway stop nearest the meeting (as in Pushkin the author - I got a kick out of going to subway stops named after Pushkin and Dostoevski), to go to an NA meeting the first night. There were three NA meetings a week at that time, but it will go down to two a week shortly because they are having trouble with the rent (at least I think that was the reason). There were about 8 addicts at the meeting - pretty much like a regular US meeting, except for being in Russian (Lena quietly translated for me.) They had one of the new Russian translations, of the "how to run a meeting" guide, but had not received the other two. Also they have a very poor-quality photocopy of

☞ from previous page

a translation of the **Basic Text**. The next night we were maybe going to go to a hospital to do an H&I presentation, but it turned out the hospital was being emptied of addicts due to a diphtheria epidemic, and so we went to an AA meeting instead (maybe half the people at that meeting also go to NA). Lena said that NA got a big boost in St. Petersburg a couple of years ago when somebody in an AA meeting asked all the addicts to raise their hands; then the meeting voted to kick them out. (Addicts talked about drugs and other weird stuff, they smoked too many cigarettes, they wanted their black tea too strong etc). This has since changed, and the addicts are back at the AA meetings as well [sic], particularly at one daily meeting (the one we went to). Nevertheless NA is definitely alive as an independent fellowship. Lena said there were about 30 NA members in St. Petersburg.

During the next two days I spent many hours with Lena, Vera T., another addict named Viktor, other addicts, various kids, it was definitely an immersion in Russian daily life. I ate at Viktor's apartment, and at Vera's house the next day, we did some sightseeing at the Hermitage and St. Isaac's Cathedral, we talked and talked... again it was really pretty intense and emotional for me. Mostly really positive, although there were many sad things as well. (All three of them have huge financial and other difficulties, and just daily life in Russia is difficult. Despite all this, the three of them seemed reasonably happy, taking things one day at a time).

The transitions were disorienting. One day I was in St. Petersburg in the rain, in a house with a leaky roof, almost in the countryside, playing with a 3 year old named Alexi and listening to people talking in Russian in the next room, then I was sitting on a train eating black bread and drinking goat's milk out of a jar, and then the next day I was back in Seattle. ♦

FALLEN ANGELS

Since we're printing our own Basic Text over here now, plus some IP's, the power Junkies with the money mind (U.K. Region) inform us that they will remove our meetings from the U.K. Where to Find and that they will be acting on behalf of the collective group conscience of the U.K. Now that's a fucking joke, and we know it!!

A few weeks back we were asked by a prison to come down and put on a Narcotics Anonymous H&I meeting. When we arrived, to our surprise, the person who had asked us down there was informed about us and our Basic Text. She was told that we do not do N.A., that our meetings are not N.A. and the Basic Text is not N.A.. This information had been told to her by the H&I rep from the East of England area.

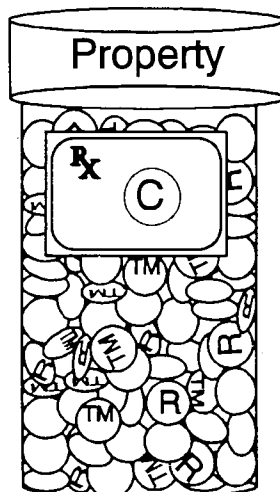
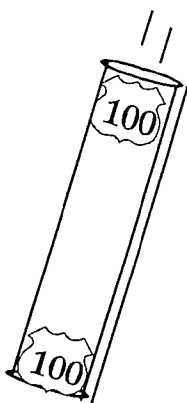
As it unfolded we found out that she had to throw the East of England Area out of the prison because one of them had withheld information about his criminal record. She is quite happy for us to go down and do our meeting and give away the Book to the prisoners. Plus this member who was thrown out was getting her to pay him expenses to come down. We know this because she offered us 30 pound to come down there every week. We refused the money. Tradition Seven.

We got this ex-RSR from East of England area Ranting and Raging about how our Basic Text makes him so angry and telling anyone who will listen not to come to our meetings. It pisses him off when a newcomer tells him we're all equal in N.A. The thing is he used to be a member of our area, East Anglia, but he left owing our area money and his wife used to be a member of one of our groups and she left owing the group money. Now it turns out his sponsor has been thrown off the B.O.T. for credit card fraud.

POWER JUNKIES WITH THE MONEY MIND. FALLEN ANGELS

Keep the faith. We love you♦

Sixth Tradition Problems



Tough habits to kick...

THE VIEW FROM SEVEN

THE PATTERN IS ALREADY SET. NOT BY US, BUT BY OUR DISEASE AND OUR CONSCIENCE OBEDIENTLY FOLLOWS IN A QUEST TO ROOT IT OUT AND GIVE LIFE TO OUR REALITY. THE PATTERN IS SET. THE CAUSE BEHIND THE EFFECT, AND THE CAUSE BEHIND THE CAUSE.

THE EFFECT IS WHERE WE SHINE, THE ACTING OUT OF THE CAUSE WITH DISEASE THE AEGIS. SUPERB ACTORS, ACTING OUT A ROLE, A ROLE DESTINED TO US BY INTERNAL SPONSORSHIP. SELF CONSUMED WHOLE IS ONLY FINISHED BY THE VISIBLE SURFACE, AND OUR ACTING OUT ON BEHALF OF OUR DISEASE PROVIDES THAT SURFACE. PROVIDES THE THIN VENEER WE CHERISH SO PROUDLY, AND CLING TO SO DESPERATELY. IT HAS NO IMPORTANCE, ONLY WHAT DISEASE GIVES IT. VALUE SUPPLIED BY FANTASY, AND DEPENDENCE ON IT OUR LIMITATION, OUR OWN DESTRUCTION.

IT IS NOT IMPORTANT IN ANY WAY, NOT IN ANY CONTEXT. NOT IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO BE DEFECT, AND CERTAINLY NOT IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO BE THE CORE OF OUR DISEASE. BUT OUR DISEASE WILL TELL US SO. FOR IT IS THE APPARENT REALITY OF ITS DECEPTION. THE DECEIT BEHIND WHICH IT DESTROYS US AND STEALS OUR LIFE. DENIES US WHAT IS REAL.

WE CONTINUALLY CREATE AND DISSOLVE OUR OWN UNIVERSE, AND WITH THAT OUR LIMITATIONS FOR IT AND FOR OURSELVES. AND THEY ARE ONE! ACTING OUT IS JUST THAT AND NO MORE. THE SEEKING OF THE EXTERNAL, PLAYING A PART ON THE EXTERIOR STAGE. UNLESS WE STOP SEEKING AN EXTERNAL SOLUTION FOR OUR SEVENTH STEP WE WILL NEVER EXCEED THE LIMITATIONS OUR DISEASE HAS SET FOR US. IN SHORT, THE SHORTCOMING IS THE MOST INTERNAL CAUSE OF OUR DISEASE, THE MAIN ROOT. AT THE CENTER OF AND THE DEEPEST OF ALL SOURCES OF ITS EXISTENCE.

FEAR IS THE DEFECT AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS THE EFFECT. THE ACTING OUT OF THAT FEAR; CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEFECT. MANIFESTATIONS OF A HIDDEN TERROR, TERROR OF AN UNKNOWN HUMAN INADEQUACY, OF THE CAUSE, THE MANIFESTATION OF THE CAUSE BEHIND THE CAUSE; THE SHORT COMING. MY ONLY SHORT COMING IS A LACK OF FAITH. THE DEFICIENCY THAT PREVENTS A FULL REALIZATION OF MYSELF, MY REALITY, THE REALITY. GOD SELF POWER. I AM THAT. THE EXPRESSION OF OUR CONSCIENCE. ONE WITH IT, NOT SEPARATE FROM WHEN I AM ABLE.

NOT TO EXERT MY WILL IN AN ATTEMPT TO MANIFEST THIS ONENESS IS DENIAL OF THE SELF FOR THE SAKE OF MY DISEASE; THE EGO THAT SEEKS TO SEPARATE ME FROM YOU, OUR CONSCIENCE, AND FROM GOD. FROM MYSELF. IN ITS STEAD I AM COMING TO TERMS WITH A NEW AND STRONGER FAITH, A FAITH THAT NOW INCLUDES A WILLINGNESS TO SURRENDER TO DISEASE CONTROLLING MY RECOVERY. ALLOWING FAITH TO PROVIDE THE PAIN, DISCOMFORT, AND DELUSION NECESSARY, ALONG WITH THE RATIONAL POWERS OF REASON INHERENT IN OUR PRINCIPLES. TO PUT THE KNOWLEDGE GAINED DURING THE TRIAL AND STRUGGLE INTO WORKABLE SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS FOR MY LIFE.

KNOWLEDGE IS BEING PROVIDED BY THE ONGOING SEARCH FOR THIS FAITH THAT WAS NOT PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE. KNOWLEDGE FROM EXPERIENCE THAT MY SEARCH FOR PURITY IS GROUNDED IN FEAR, MY DESIRE TO GUIDE IS BASED ON MY NEED TO CONTROL, I.E. PERSONAL LOVE IS AN EXTENSION OF MY PERSONALITY. FOR ME TO SEEK EXTERNAL POWER IN ORDER TO GUIDE WOULD BE IN CONFLICT WITH OUR PRINCIPLES OF RECOVERY, (OUR LEADERS ARE BUT TRUSTED SERVANTS THEY DO NOT GOVERN.) IS COUNTER PRODUCTIVE TO MY RECOVERY, AND ULTIMATELY A DISSERVICE TO OUR CONSCIENCE AND TO THE FELLOWSHIP. THE TRADITION IS THE CONSUMMATE ACT OF THE STEP. I MUST SEEK THE EXAMPLE. TIME TO GO ON.

AS WE CONTINUE, I PRAY: MAKE YOUR CARE AND GUIDANCE A REALITY TO ME. GRANT ME FAITH TO BECOME, A MESSAGE OF YOUR WILL; YOUR LOVE AND YOUR PEACE. MAKE ME YOUR TRUE CHILD. HELP ME TO SEEK A MORE YEARNING SPIRIT, AND A DEEPER LONGING FOR THE TRUTH. REMOVE THE SELF THAT BINDS ME TO MY IGNORANCE. SO I MAY SURRENDER AND BE WITH YOU ALWAYS.◇

Recovery Checker

We are still powerless over our disease of addiction. Recovery does not change that. The disease of addiction is forever looking to lead us off our path of recovery. It takes no teabreaks. The disease can cause us pain or it can cause us to relapse. Working the steps in our lives and taking opportunities to improve our recovery is the surest defence against these problems.



Addiction is like a slug with no slime. It often creeps silently into our lives without us realising. Using this checker can help us to see when this happens, and can show us opportunities to improve our lives.

We do not need to be perfect. We strive for progress not perfection. We all have our areas of sickness, and we do recover. Ultimately our recovery is in the hands of our higher power.

If you think there are right and wrong answers to these questions, it is suggested that you go over them with a sponsor.

1. Are you recovering?
2. Are you happy with your recovery?
3. What step are you working on? Do you want to work on it today?
4. Do you want to do something else for your recovery?
5. Are you happy with the number of meetings you attend? Are you justifying not going?
6. Are you isolating in meetings?
7. Are you reluctant to ask for help?
8. Would you rather save your face than your arse?
9. Do you eat food containing drugs?
10. Do you think alcohol is different than other drugs?
11. Are you acting out your disease with substances or patterns other than drugs?
12. What can you do when you feel uncomfortable?
13. Are you obsessed?
14. When driving do you work the steps? Do you get impatient, intolerant or angry?
15. Are you living with drugs?
16. What do the slogans mean to you?
17. Are you obsessing about the past or future?
18. Are you learning to apply the traditions in your life?
19. Is recovery the most important thing in your life? Are you willing to go to any lengths to recover?
20. Do you have reservations about N.A.?
21. Do you feel negative?
22. Are you doing service? What can you give to your home group?
23. Are you offering to help others without dictating to them? Do you think your beliefs and practices are the only way? Do you try to manipulate people?
24. Are you taking care of your needs?
25. Do you hurt others? Do you abuse people? Do you take advantage of people? Do you put people down behind their backs?
26. Do you believe you have a physical, mental and spiritual disease?
27. Are you powerless over your disease?
28. Is your life unmanageable? Do you think you know how to fix it?
29. Are you trying to work the program alone? Are you reaching out to others? Are you working with a sponsor?
30. Do you try to make regular conscious contact with your higher power? Are you using prayer, meditation, or quiet time daily?
31. Do you have a concept of a higher power that does not work for you? Does your higher power love you unconditionally? Does it punish you? Does it abandon you?
32. Are you accepting people as they are?
33. Do you blame others for the way you react to situations?
34. Do you accept life as it is? Are you frustrated because you can't have it your own way? If so, how are you dealing with it?
35. Can you accept yourself? What do you feel when you look in the mirror?
36. Are you accepting your feelings?
37. Are you giving yourself a hard time? Do you think you need to be perfect?

If we are unhappy with any of the answers to these questions we are free to change if we want to, with our higher power's help.



Dear New Awakenings,

I have enjoyed your last two issues and I decided to write when I learned that I wouldn't be able to join my Sponsor and former Homegroup in Frederick, MD for our annual Trek to the Smithsonian this year. This is my experience with the Louisville Area Service Structure. This ones for you guys.

When our Area Service Committees find themselves struggling, many of us become distressed because we feel attached towards, and dependant upon, our service structure. By "struggling" we mean an Area Service Committee that cannot pay its bills, fill its Trusted Servant positions, conduct business, uphold the Traditions in all its affairs or be directly responsible to those it serves. This state of affairs often causes a ground-swell of support among concerned members who want to save Area Service and prop it back up. Such attempts, however well intentioned, are equal to putting a band-aid on a severed limb -- it's not going to work. We find that, just like a relapse, the roots of the apparent symptom are linked to a history of disease.

There is only one effort which will save an Area and this is strengthening the Homegroups. We must support our Homegroups, for it is only through their growth that an Area will continue to function properly. This is the foundation upon which our Service Structure is founded. A loving God, as found through our Group Conscience, is our only authority and this can be found nowhere except within our Groups. Without strong Homegroups we find no Group Conscience and, therefore, our efforts become diseased and they wither.

A strong Homegroup works hard to ensure that the "WE" of N.A. is upheld. Knowing we can do nothing alone and that none of us consistently makes good decisions, we schedule Group Conscience and business meetings at a convenient time allowing as many members as possible to participate. We teach the newer members about their responsibilities as N.A. members by asking for their input and we model principled behavior through our own concern and care for matters pertaining to our Homegroup and beyond.

We attend our Homegroup regularly and do not miss our Group Conscience, unless unavoidably detained. We fully discuss our business -- looking at both pros and cons with as much input from the addicts present as possible. When we are unsure, or no member has experience, we seek help and ask questions of those who came before us. We seek experience, strength and hope from members outside our Area in our efforts to widen our base of recovery.

We employ spiritual principles in our Group Conscious meetings such as, but not limited to, honesty, open-mindedness, accountability, humility, service, questioning, acceptance and faith. We experience recovery together, in our Homegroup meetings, as we learn to interact with each other. The relationships that develop teach us that we can reach compromise, consensus or disagree without being disagreeable. We learn to get angry at the disease, but love the addict. We learn that our Trusted Servants should be qualified and should have demonstrated the willingness and tools necessary to perform their service. We learn not to "dope-fiend" someone into a service role just because no one meeting the Group's Guidelines is willing to serve. We become a family of sorts; one whose faces consistently change and where each member gives love to the best of their present ability.

A Homegroup is also a place where a new face doesn't

leave without being welcomed and made to feel at home. A Homegroup is a meeting in which we strive to ensure the Traditions are honored and recovery is heard more than disease. A Homegroup is a meeting where we make sure the door is always open and the coffee made a half-hour before the meeting begins. We do these things as we were taught and do them to the best of our present ability and willingness.

It is irresponsible, on three parts, for a Homegroup to send a Group Service Representative to an Area Service Meeting with their "vote of confidence." (Meaning that the group has given this Servant the power to bypass Group Conscious and make decisions for it.) First of all, we, as addicts, cannot afford to give away the responsibility and self-support we have fought so hard to gain and surely would die without. If we cannot afford to slough off responsibilities in other areas of our lives then we must certainly ensure that our votes and input are carried to the Area in the form of Group Conscience - not a individual's opinion. Secondly, placing this sort of responsibility on a single member is tantamount to accessory to murder. We die through our efforts to control and manipulate, so why would a Homegroup place one of it's members in just such an arena? Finally, sending a Group Service Representative to the Area Service meeting with a "vote of confidence" initiates, or contributes to, sickness and disease at the Area Service.

We, as addicts, cannot afford to give away the responsibility and self-support we have fought so hard to gain...

Unfortunately, many Area Service Committees operate with Group Service Representatives who carry a "vote of confidence" whether the power was formally given to the Representative or simply abused by them. Although this power is convenient and business-like, it is not spiritual and, therefore not practical. It is also not N.A.

The N.A. Fellowship, and our Service Structure, begins with the individual -- as represented through the Homegroup and its Conscience. Any policy or practice that cuts off the voice of the individual member, no matter how well intentioned, is sick and that sickness will spread all the way down through the Service Structure to the World Service Office if unabated.

It is imperative, therefore, to Group Conscience any decision made within the confines of the Homegroup, Area Service, Regional Service or World Service. This is a time consuming and often laborious process; hence the rallying cry heard at too many Area Service Meetings, "We don't have time to fool with principles, we've got business to conduct." Such actions will keep us sick and will make Area Service a place most avoid. Its frightening to think that we might use principles only when convenient, or when they don't interfere with business, because we have learned that half measures avail us nothing. ♦

We are convinced that there is only one way for us to Live, and that is the NA way.

We are a non-profit society and have no dues or fees of any kind. Each of us has paid the price of membership. We have paid dearly with our pain for the right to recover.

Non-profit - to not obtain gains in the areas of finance, advantage, or benefit. (money, property, or prestige.)

Society - any number of people associated together with collective interests.

No member of our Society or Fellowship should profit from our Fellowship. What we receive from NA is a way of life worth living. No one should profit with jobs, favors, expenses, contracts, cash, paid positions, and/or advantage. We're all equal and it must stay that way to be considered spiritually non-profit.

Some people might say it's OK because it's a legal non-profit. They forget we are NA and answer to a spiritual authority. Legally it's considered OK for Addicts to use prescribed drugs and over the counter drugs including alcohol. We know this won't work. The law does not guide us in Recovery. If it does we will surely die.

So, how do we provide services within the spiritual guidance of the Traditions? First we must define who and what will provide the services. Obviously one addict helping another is who, and the best place to do this is in an NA meeting, the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message.

Since the beginning NA members have sought to carry the NA message around the world. An addict would travel to a place for business, pleasure, or to relocate. The NA member would start a meeting, help other addicts start a meeting, or support the ongoing meeting. That's it. It has happened this way since the beginning. What works best is a continuing, consistent NA message, delivered by an NA member, to start NA in a new place.

The Group is the best way to provide this message. The Group puts NA members and other Addicts seeking recovery together so that the magic of empathy, honesty, caring, sharing and service can do their work. That is why NA members must, and almost always do, try to start a NA meeting. All other services must be geared to getting Addicts to NA meetings.

The Group must provide a stable, reliable, recovery-oriented meeting. How is this done? By using the Traditions as their guide. The meeting proceeds as the Group conscience has decided, as long as it is consistent with the Traditions. In this way no two meetings are exactly alike - in fact some may be quite different - yet there is unity because all of them are consistent with the spiritual principles in the Steps and Traditions.

The Group provides NA literature, a place to meet, possibly refreshments, etc. for the meeting. The Group also provides the NA members of the Group with

information on services directly responsible to the Group, and offers the members of the Group equal participation on what and how services are provided. The Group may also provide other services like carrying the NA message to places where addicts cannot attend NA meetings and informing the general public about NA. Some services can be done by two or more Groups coming together, provided that the equality of direct responsibility is kept intact. This can be done on any scale from two Groups to two million Groups as long as there is direct responsibility and combining more Groups makes it more efficient and effective.

It's up to the Group to decide whether it wants to be part of these committees or projects. You might say "won't this impact on our unity"? The answer is "of course not". Our unity depends on Groups adhering to the Traditions. Because no matter which NA meeting you go to, the NA message - and only the NA message - is provided. This is our unity, not whether or not the Group supports a certain service entity.

The NA Group can provide all services required to have an NA meeting and carry the NA message in their community. When Groups create service committees they do so to make it easier on the individual Groups. For instance; it's cheaper and easier to make one set of meeting schedules, for a geographic area, than many different ones for the same area.

So can this work? Many people at WSO Inc., WSC, RSO's and other service positions without direct responsibility say "no way". Of course if it does work they would be out of a job, lose their influence, their advantage, their benefits, their livelihood.

A Group or Groups can provide for H+I, PI, and Literature for their geographic area.

If a Group or Groups produced NA literature themselves the price would be one tenth of what it is now. That is, if your Group spent \$1,000 a year on literature it would only need to spend \$100 a year for the same literature. Or it could buy ten times as much literature. Think of having Free literature, including the NA Basic Text, at every meeting. Imagine a Step meeting with thirty people and everyone has a Basic Text to read out of. Think of how cheaper literature would help in doing H+I and PI work. We might even be able to support NA through our own contributions!

Is there a need for a "World organization"? Probably not. God has given us our NA message; The NA message provided by committees that were directly responsible to the Fellowship and approved by the entire Fellowship.

We have the means to communicate through Newsletters, collaborations, telephone, computers, and one Addict to another. The message has and will be provided to the world by one Addict informing another.

Can we do this? God gave us this Program. Let's trust and give it a try. It starts with me, you and God, better know as WE.♦

AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

The groups say...

In the surveys that had been received before the end of January the responses look like they say apathy. 12,260 questionnaires mailed with a response of 13% totaling only 1549 group answers. Only 51% of the groups were aware of the functions of world services. Lack of information to groups seems to be the next most evident. Less than 1/3 know that we have a publication called MEETING BY MAIL. The clearest message seems to be that new projects shall not be acted upon without the approval of the fellowship, 82%.

As you look closer at the report from the Composite Group you see other things happening. Figures can say what you want them to say. Over 1/3 responded that they didn't trust world services or didn't know if they did. The summary takes those that didn't know out of an equation and says "of those who either trusted or not, 86% expressed trust". This is done again on the question "is your group satisfied with world services?", and again on satisfaction on how world services spends money. So read this information and decide for yourself. Please don't let me or others convince you, in your lack of information, of facts that you can know for your own understanding.

Only 52% of those responding felt that the decisions of world services reflect the overall conscience of all NA groups. This, perhaps more than anything, reflects the apathy that exists in our groups for the current structure. It shows that we are not serving those we serve, directly. There's not much awareness and yet there is request for more information, especially financial: 65%. That has been asked about for years and never supplied to the groups' satisfaction.

There is more information in the rest of the survey responses from Area's and Regions. Perhaps more on those at a later date.

The early reports from the Committees show some similar feelings and I wish that all of you would have the interest to pursue these comments and be aware of how things are looked at and not let others make the decisions for you.

If things are to change with the effort that is being done then many of you could help by being better informed before the changes are made and you find you don't like them. Your RSR has all this material and chances are you will never see this stuff unless you ask for it. This ability to censor what you have been able to find out has gone on long enough and I hope your apathy is ending and your involvement increasing with making your groups the best informed groups anywhere. Let me hear how it's going.

POWER TO THE GROUPS. IT'S WHERE IT BELONGS.

LIVE OUR 5TH TRADITION AND FULFILL YOUR 12TH STEP ♦

Voice from the Grave

I'm Grateful Dave. I'm an addict.

Where do we go from here? Do we go to hell in a hand-basket? In that withering, unspiritual thing we call World Services today? Or do we create some viable alternatives and work along a parallel track?

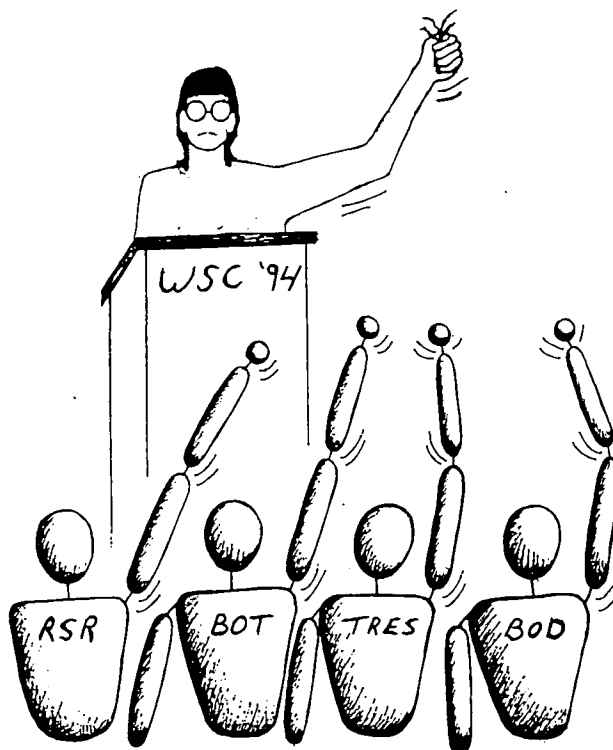
Everything that we're doing in Narcotics Anonymous today, in my opinion, is upside down from what Jimmy Kinnon founded this Fellowship to be. And I've listened to tapes from, from all of the people, from F____, from all the way up in Northern California and down, and Jimmy, you know, I mean we got to look to something. Jimmy was the glue that held this Fellowship together.

We got things to do. But that's - you see - that's reality. I didn't know if the book was going to be right, wrong, or indifferent. But it was better than being paralyzed. That paralyzing fear, that helpless, hopeless, what-am-I-going-to-do and who's-going-to-do-it? Are you going to do it? Are *you* going to do it? I finally said, "...I know how to wake 'em up...I know how to do it." And all I have to do is find the personal gumption, and the commitment to do something.

I have a Tenth Step. I've been wrong. I don't do everything right. But I do something. if we're to sit in the chairs like bumps on a log and wish and hope and dream you know, that somebody else is going to come up with some magic formula to do it for us, it's never going to

continued next page

ALL IN FAVOR



"...no strings attached...!"?

happen. "Through our inability to accept personal responsibility we were actually creating our own problems. We are the architects of our own adversity. We argue for our limitations and they will be ours forever."

There is no limitations to the Steps and Traditions and the Spirit that Narcotics Anonymous was founded in. We can do better. And of course I don't have any credibility. 'Cause I'm out to destroy Narcotics Anonymous. Jimmy and B_____ and D_____ and F_____ and other people are not the only people that have been shot at and had death threats in this Fellowship. You know, that's ugly. I've had those things happen to me too. For trying to carry the message. You can complain about the way I did it, but none of you did it. None of you got off your... duffs and did anything. So, I mean, gee I'm sorry that I didn't do it just perfectly, but I was seeking help for years, trying to get people to help; let's do this, let's talk about this, let's unify, let's ask these serious, tough questions. The service structure works great if you want to have a dance at the National Guard armory. But God forbid you ask for an outside audit. "Ohh! You're causing disunity!", you know.

Nobody wants to deal with reality, that's a fact of our disease. And euphoria, clean, is the same type of euphoria that we sought out there using man. It's just as dangerous in here as it was out there. We have a disease that's out to kill us. It's out to deny us our history. It's out to deny us our dignity, personally and the Groups. If we're going to do something, each and every person in this room must physically, do something.

I mean to me World Service has become irrelevant. The only thing left today that World Service can tell us, that will touch our emotional gut, is the international issues and "we have to take this international thing and we have to spread this message internationally". If we would just give them the literature and allow them to do their own service their own way in their own country, there wouldn't be any "international issue", fellahs. Here, you take the literature, you come back when you've translated it, we'll check out and work out the little bugs and that's it. That's it. No international issue. It's a sham, it's a bright shiny thing that they use to keep you on the string.

We have got to go *somewhere* from here. Because just like it says in the Second Tradition, "The self-seeking soon find they are on the outside causing dissention and eventually disaster for themselves. Some will change and become the role models for others to follow." We need to change. We have every thing we need in Narcotics Anonymous. Everything. We have the Steps, the Traditions, and each other.

I was a chump for everyone. I was like a jail-house punk with my ass up in the air, and everybody fucked me. And that's what my life was. If I thought that you would allow me to sit in a room and shoot dope with you, you could pat me on the back, you know, 30 seconds, and rip me off for the next 30 years because I was so desperate to be loved. I have learned in personal recovery that anybody that manipulates me into doing anything has no fuckin' respect for me so I'm going to lose whatever I was after to begin with. If I'm seeking your approval and I need your love to validate my existence, then I'm doing the same shit that I was doing out there in the street, you know? So, those are the things in recovery that I'm *not* proud of.

Am I proud of putting together the information on the Fourth Edition? Yes! Am I proud of working for the disapproval of It Works: How and Why? Yes! I'm proud of that. And I'm proud that my Homegroup had enough gumption to print a book to give to addicts? Yes, I'm proud of that. Those are the things that I'm proud of today.

And you know, I'm tired, I mean *so* sick and tired. I've had a formal service position since I had three days clean. And you know what? There is no service structure because there is no Group Conscience. It's an empty shell. And you can doubt that, but that's what has brought us to this point, that's what brought us here tonight. It's that emptiness. The death of a dream, someone said. And I just, you know, we all got to take a look at ourselves.♦

[From remarks made at the Lehigh, Pa. History Conference July 1991. Thank you Dave, Rest in Peace.]

To get *New Awakenings*

Just send us your name and address. Use this form if you wish. Send us a letter if you can. We publish the first week of every other month. Getting you one issue #3 in the U.S. cost 67.8¢. Projecting from this cost we figure a year's subscription (6 issues) should be \$4.07. Sending more enables *New Awakenings* to go out to addicts who haven't seen it yet.

♪If you move don't forget,
let us know where you went!♪

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Attention: A.S.I.S. Supporters, Friends of New Awakenings, Disaffected Ones

As a result of the Alternate Service Information Structure (A.S.I.S.) questionnaire, there will be a gathering in Baltimore, MD Sept. 1-3. All but one of the members who responded wished to be part of an alternative structure. All respondents wanted to participate in group tally consciences and indicated interest in various forms of communication including computer bulletin boards (BBS's), modem, conference calls and common meetings. Newsletters were also mentioned as a means of communication.

It would seem that a gathering now would be the best way to proceed with our efforts. On Thursday night we will gather to greet all our old & new friends, discuss old & new projects and set an agenda for the rest of the weekend. May God guide our hopes and aspirations. See you there!

Location:

Immanuel United Church of Christ
1905 Edmonson Ave
Baltimore, Maryland

Sept 1	Thursday	7:00pm-10:00pm	Fireside Rm
Sept 2	Friday	10:00am-5:00pm	Fellowship Hall
Sept 3	Saturday	10:00am-6:00pm	Fellowship Hall

Directions from Downtown Baltimore

Rt 395 (Martin Luther King Blvd) to I-95 South
Exit 49B, 695 West to
Exit 14 Edmonson Ave

Turn left onto Edmonson Ave; after the 3rd traffic light the church is the first building on the left, approximately 1.6 miles from 695.

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